Hornets' Nest part Two - The Dead Shoes, by Paul Magrs

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(On the CD - a recap with extracts from The Stuff of Nightmares.)
(Tom Baker's opening Doctor Who theme, composed by Ron Grainer.)
ANNOUNCER: (Tom Baker) Doctor Who. Hornets' Nest. The Dead Shoes, by Paul Magrs. Starring Tom Baker and Richard Franklin.

(Various animal growls.)
MIKE YATES: Your menagerie is still padding about up there, Doctor. I'd have thought some of them might have dropped off to sleep by now.
THE DOCTOR: They don't sleep, Mike. How can they? They're dead.
MIKE YATES: Only you, Doctor, would fill your house with dead animals, and evil ones at that.
THE DOCTOR: For safe keeping, Mike. As long as they're inside the force-shield around this house they can't creep out and menace the living. Night is when they're most active and malign.
MIKE YATES: And so for the duration, we're stuck down here.
THE DOCTOR: Mm.
MIKE YATES: Just the two of us?
THE DOCTOR: Mm.
MIKE YATES: Waiting in the cellar for morning?
THE DOCTOR: Mm.
MIKE YATES: Like old times, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: Mm.
MIKE YATES: Remember that trouble in Devil's End?
THE DOCTOR: Oh, don't go wandering off down memory lane, Captain Yates.
MIKE YATES: Oh.
THE DOCTOR: I need to appraise you of some rather more recent adventures first.
MIKE YATES: Not more about the deadly taxidermy workshop of Percy Noggins?
THE DOCTOR: Noggins is no longer any kind of threat. After delivering his many possessed creatures to my door, he went meekly home to look after his elderly grandma. She's rather infirm. Used to be a dancer, he told me. Maiden name of Stott. Ernestina Stott.
MIKE YATES: Er, does this have some bearing on what you're about to relate?
THE DOCTOR: I was reading a dusty almanac from one of the shelves here - it's important to keep a good library. I was looking for odd mentions of unseasonal insects, that sort of thing, and I happened upon a mention of a dancer called Miss Stott. She'd had a very strange experience by the sea, a good few years ago. It all began when she was stung by a hornet.
MIKE YATES: And you were intrigued by the connection ... I expect I can guess what comes next.
THE DOCTOR: I followed Percy's grandma's personal timeline to that very summer. The very day that she was stung on the sea front, at Cromer.

(Organ playing "I Do Like To Be Beside the Seaside" with seagull sounds in the background.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I do like to be beside the seaside, especially when it's a very out of the way spot, like Cromer on the Norfolk coast. Do you know it, Mike? It's changed a bit since the Nineteen Thirties. That's when I was there, taking long strolls on the rock-strewn beach, demolishing fish suppers, and staying in a guest house quite close to the pier.
(Organ music playing "Dance Of The Sugar Plum Fairy.")
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) In the evenings, I would sit in the lounge with summer breezes billowing the curtains, and carrying in the faint strains of music from the theatre at the end of the pier. Every night it was The Nutcracker, performed by a cast of one on the smallest stage in Europe, suspended over the crashing North Sea.
(Tide sounds.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) My brief foray into the past was almost like a holiday. Regaining my

breath and my strength after the rigours of my adventures, I planned to be back here at Nest Cottage before long, to resume my struggles with my nebulous enemies. But in the meantime, I was beside the sea, filling my lungs with clean salty air, and taking in the sights and the sounds. The Nutcracker, every night. I had seen posters for this remarkable one-woman show. Ernestina Stott, the nimblest ballerina in the world apparently, was dancing her heart out on the stage at the end of Cromer pier. On my third day in town, I discovered a curious museum not far from my guest house. It was a musty, dusty, flyblown place. All the glass cabinets and the windows were mottled with the dirt of ages. Even so, there was a delicious disorder about the place. Fossilised ichthyosaurs shared the wall space with oil paintings of long-dead Victorian pets. Dolls houses sat in cabinets beside the mummified hands of cat burglars and murderers. Puppets and skeletons, coins and light bulbs, shoes and playbills, all lay higgledy-piggledy and quite undisturbed. That morning as I entered the foyer, it seemed I was the only visitor to the neglected museum of curios. And yet, I wasn't alone.

THE DOCTOR: Hello? Hello? Ah. Good morning, sir.
MRS WIBBSEY: (clears her throat.)
THE DOCTOR: Madam? What a wonderful collection of old and decaying things.
MRS WIBBSEY: Charmed I'm sure, sir.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Oh dear. The curatress seemed to think I was counting her as part of the collection. Truth be told, she was rather withered and grey. She looked piqued and past her best, standing there glowering across the counter.

MRS WIBBSEY: If you'd like to make a contribution to the upkeep of the Cromer Palace of Curios?
THE DOCTOR: Well, I have here a Denobian Slime-Dollar. I'm sure it's worth a great deal more than it looks.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She didn't seem very impressed.

THE DOCTOR: And you are...?
MRS WIBBSEY: Mrs Wibbsey, curatress of Cromer Curios.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) This was how I first encountered that delightful fun-loving soul, not too far away in Norfolk, but several decades back.

THE DOCTOR: You're not very busy, are you?
MRS WIBBSEY: We have two visitors this morning, that's very unusual for us.
THE DOCTOR: Is it?
MRS WIBBSEY: People in this town are too frivolous. They come here to play in the amusement arcades or to listen to the band in the park or to waste their lives watching rubbish at the end of the pier. Too few people are interested in history or in the relics of the past.
THE DOCTOR: Ah, but I am, Mrs Wibbsey, I'm very interested indeed. You might even say, I *am* a relic of the past. Hah!
MRS WIBBSEY: Really.
THE DOCTOR: Yeah - or the future. Who's to tell these days?
MRS WIBBSEY: I see.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I watched with great pleasure as she stowed away the Denobian Slime-Dollar in the cash desk, and I proceeded into the museum for a good old mooch about. I was just examining an alarming contraption for predicting storms, when I became aware of the museum's other visitor that morning.

THE DOCTOR: Hello. I'm the Doctor.
ERNESTINA: Oh. Good morning.
THE DOCTOR: Look at this. It's from the Eighteenth Century. They thought that if they put leeches in these little bell jars they would dance about if there was an electrical storm coming, and that would somehow set off a kind of alarm system and ... amazing ingenuity. Preposterous, of cour... Hold on. Don't I know your face? I never forget a face.
ERNESTINA: Would you leave me alone, please?

THE DOCTOR: I've been it on the posters all over t... Ernestina Stott, that's who you are ... Can I have your autograph?
(ERNESTINA sighs,)

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I could see that she wasn't keen on talking with me, however fascinating the leech storm detection machine was. And it was. I wanted to make one of my own.

ERNESTINA: If you'll excuse me.
THE DOCTOR: Oh.
(Buzzing sound becomes audible.)
THE DOCTOR: It seems that we're the only two people in town with any interest in the past.
ERNESTINA: Really?
THE DOCTOR: Now, what kind ...? Oh!
ERNESTINA: What is it?
THE DOCTOR: Can't you hear it? Seems to be the drone of an insect. A hornet, if I'm not mistaken.
ERNESTINA: Hardly surprising. It's Summer.
THE DOCTOR: Quite.
ERNESTINA: As a matter of fact, I was stung yesterday as I was walking on the beach, by the tiniest hornet you've ever seen. But it was a horrible vicious thing. It was caught in my garments for some time. I'm afraid I panicked rather. It stung me again and again.
THE DOCTOR: Oh dear. I'm sorry to hear that.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She smiled politely, and was obviously keen to terminate our conversation. She lowered her head and moved away.

THE DOCTOR: I've heard your music every evening, wafting over from the pier at dusk.
ERNESTINA: Have you?
THE DOCTOR: Yes. Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy. (Laughs.) That's my favourite bit. Tchaikovsky was terribly good company, you know. Most composers aren't, I've found, always scribbling, or tootling away on a kazoo or something.
ERNESTINA: Look, do you think you could leave me alone, please?
THE DOCTOR: Oh! Oh now, what have you found there? I say. That's marvellous, isn't it?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Ernestina had parked herself before a dusty glass cabinet in the far corner of the large room. She seemed transfixed by the small objects standing on the plinth within. I hastened over to see. Two quite faded ballet slippers, dusky pink, with ribbon laces dangling. The most remarkable thing about these shoes was that they still had a pair of feet inside, desiccated and putty-coloured and severed at the ankles, but still quite obviously a pair of feet. A pair that fitted inside the dancing-shoes, oh so snugly. Ernestina gazed at this macabre spectacle with a rapt expression. She looked greedy. She wanted those shoes. I could see it at once. I tried to lighten the mood.

THE DOCTOR: Now, there's something you don't see every day. Somebody must be rather footloose and fancy free. (Laughs.)

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) But she wasn't listening. I watched incredulous as Ernestina turned, and picked up a heavy wooden chair placed there for the comfort of visitors. Without a word, the dancer lifted it effortlessly above her head, and smashed it full force into the glass cabinet. I was a spectator at a surreal smash and grab, an appalled bystander as the ballerina tiptoed through the shattered glass, and seized the two mummified feet. She was acting under some weird compulsion. I knew at once what it had been caused by. In a flash, she was gone, nimble as a beam of light. She was out of the museum in a jiffy, and I was left to face the wrath of Mrs Wibbsey, who had been summoned at a run by the smashing glass. Her pinched face was white with shock.

MRS WIBBSEY: What's happening? What have you done?
THE DOCTOR: Nothing. It was that girl - the dancer.
MRS WIBBSEY: Well, where is she now?

THE DOCTOR: She's hopped off, with a pair of feet.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Mrs Wibbsey was incandescent with fury. Really, I thought, she must be very attached to the historical objects under her guardianship to make the fuss that she did. I tried to calm her down.

MRS WIBBSEY: You don't know anything about it.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) While she was on the telephone to the local police, I decided to make my exit. It doesn't do to get tangled up in police enquiries. They tend to get in the way of one's own investigations. I sloped off, whilst the Fury's back was turned. I made plans to attend Ernestina's dance spectacular that very evening, and on the way home stopped off at the local licensed victuallers. I'm no particular expert in dance...
(Audience sounds then Dance Of The Sugar Plum Fairy.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) ... but that evening as the small audience sat raptly concentrating on the stage at the end of the Cromer pier, I knew that we were witnessing something astonishing. Miss Stott's feet whirred and blurred like a hummingbird's wings. She leapt, she soared, she whirled through the lamp-lit air. At one feverish point towards the end, I could have sworn that she left the ground for a good ten minutes without touching down. It was hard to be sure. What was certain was that she was dancing with supernatural brilliance. Her crowd neglected their choc ices, and let them dribble down their sleeves, as they gazed openmouthed...
(Applause.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) ... And some of the things she got up to were plainly impossible. Afterwards, I hastened to the backstage area, champagne bottle in hand, alternately charming and bullying my way to her dressing-room door.

THE DOCTOR: I merely wanted to pass on my congratulations.
ERNESTINA: I don't want to see anyone. After performances I'm sure you understand, I am quite wrung out.
THE DOCTOR: But it's me. The Doctor. We met this afternoon, remember? In the Palace of Curios.
ERNESTINA: I'm sorry. I've been resting all day in preparation for my show. You must be mistaken.
THE DOCTOR: But I'm never mistaken. I was there when you purloined your fancy footwear - in a sense ... hah ... I'm an accomplice, Miss Stott. I thought we might drink a little toast together.
ERNESTINA: My mother and father were abstainents sir, and brought me up as such. Kindly leave me in peace.
THE DOCTOR: Very well. But tell me one thing. Those slippers you stole, were you wearing them this evening for the dance?
ERNESTINA: I stole nothing.
THE DOCTOR: Miss Stott, I think you should stop playing games and tell me. Those shoes you stole, there was something very strange about them. There was a vibration on the air surrounding them. I believe they were attuned to a weird set of frequencies.
ERNESTINA: What utter nonsense.
THE DOCTOR: I believe those shoes are dancing to someone else's tune, not yours.
ERNESTINA: I'll have you thrown out.
THE DOCTOR: There's no need for that. I simply wanted to warn you. Don't wear those shoes. You don't know where they've been. The beings they belonged to will want them back.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She looked petulant and discomforted, swaddled up in her dressing robe in the doorway of her room. Just as I was being bundled out by the management, I turned back to give her a jaunty wave, and saw that she was indeed wearing the lethal slippers. As I was ejected onto the wind-lashed pier, braving the freezing sea spray and the dark, all I could think about was those shoes. I was wondering what Ernestina had done with the two mummified feet that had lain inside, presumably for a very long time indeed. Whose were those feet? Who had owned the shoes in the first place? I wanted answers, and the only person who could supply them was Mrs Wibbsey, the fount of all knowledge at the Palace of Curios. Back at the guest house, the lounge was astir with talk of Miss Ernestina Stott's

marvellous performance.

REVEREND SMALL: They say she literally flew about the stage. At least, that's what they were whispering in the Pig's Eye at closing time.
THE DOCTOR: Mm. I imagine all kinds of things get whispered at the Pig's Eye at closing time, Reverend.
REVEREND SMALL: They say the girl is enchanted, bewitched.
THE DOCTOR: I don't believe in magic, and neither do you as a man of the cloth, hmm?
REVEREND SMALL: Oh, you see some very funny things in my line of work.
(Bell jingles.)
REVEREND SMALL: Things that make you think.
THE DOCTOR: Yes, I know the feeling. Nightcap?
(Ladies indignant sounds as though being annoyed by a buzzing insect.)
REVEREND SMALL: Oh, a small one. The ladies seem to be in a flap. Look.
THE DOCTOR: Mm. What's going on?
REVEREND SMALL: Some sort of insect. They don't bother me. I was in the Far East, you know.
THE DOCTOR: Our landlady has fainted.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I watched as the vicar leapt rather gallantly into action with a rolled-up number of Picture Goer. He raced about the place, trying to smash the life out of the oversized hornet that was plaguing the ladies in the guest house lounge.

REVEREND SMALL: What a monster! Where's it gone?
THE DOCTOR: I think you drove it out. Hah! Funny thing, I got the feeling it was hunting around, looking for something, didn't you?
REVEREND SMALL: Wicked-looking if you ask me.
THE DOCTOR: Yes. Well, it's gone now. Good night, sweet ladies, and Reverend Small.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I slipped into my room, and when the house was settled for the night, I slipped back out again, to the TARDIS. The old thing was parked beside the gaudy amusement arcade. I spent the nighttime hours extracting data from her infinite memory banks, mulling over anything I could find to do with dancers, shoes, ballet, severed feet, cursed slippers. But nothing very useful leapt out at me. And at last came dawn over the sea at Cromer, and I went for a bracing walk as the wild gulls swerved and dashed themselves against the stiff winds. By opening time, I was banging on the door of the Palace of Curios.

(Gull sounds, banging on door. Door opened.)
MRS WIBBSEY: What? Oh, you again.
THE DOCTOR: I've come to ask a few questions.
MRS WIBBSEY: I could have had you arrested, helping that loopy girl yesterday.
THE DOCTOR: I never helped her. That's the last thing I would have done.
MRS WIBBSEY: Really? To me you look like a troublemaker.
THE DOCTOR: Quite possibly, Mrs Wibbsey, but this time I am not the worst offender. That girl has done something very foolish indeed.
MRS WIBBSEY: You'd better come inside.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) The curatress's manner changed. In the privacy of the museum, she became furtive.

MRS WIBBSEY: She is in very grave danger.
THE DOCTOR: I thought so. I saw her show last night. She danced like...
MRS WIBBSEY: Like the very Devil.
THE DOCTOR: I don't believe in the Devil.
MRS WIBBSEY: I do. He comes in all sorts of forms.
THE DOCTOR: He comes to you?
MRS WIBBSEY: I...

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She blinked, and seemed to return to her senses in an instant.

MRS WIBBSEY: Why am I telling you anything?
THE DOCTOR: Perhaps because you'll feel better for unburdening yourself.
MRS WIBBSEY: I have no secrets.
THE DOCTOR: No? I think, Mrs Wibbsey, you know more about those slippers than I do, but I would like to learn. Which poor unfortunate's mummified feet were inside them until yesterday?
MRS WIBBSEY: You're saying that she removed the feet from the shoes?
THE DOCTOR: Mm. She had to - in order to wear them herself.
MRS WIBBSEY: Then she has brought down a curse upon us all. And most especially upon herself.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) And at that, Mrs Wibbsey clammed up tighter than one of the lobster pots stacked so tidily against the harbour walls. The spell had broken. I could probe her with no more questions. She scowled like a cross old cat, hissing and spitting, until I went.
(Gulls sound on a wind-swept coastline.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) That evening, I returned to the theatre at the end of the pier. I took with me the Reverend Mr Small, who was clearly avid to see the much-discussed prima ballerina.

(Sounds of other people in background.)
REVEREND SMALL: It's so long since I attended anything like this.
THE DOCTOR: I'd be surprised if you ever had.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We sat in the dark, our lollies melting as the lights went down and the overture finished. In the hushed expectant darkness, we could hear the swelling and roiling of the dark sea underneath our feet. The wind was whipping round the theatre that night, but inside all was still and hushed as we waited for Ernestina to make her entrance.

(Music - Dance Of The Sugar Plum Fairy.)
REVEREND SMALL: How marvellous. Exquisite. But how does she dance like that? That's impossible, surely?
THE DOCTOR: You'd think so, wouldn't you?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) While the audience's attention was held fast by her feet, I stared at her face. What I saw there was a mask etched with panic, a rictus of fear. Her eyes were wide and pleading, and no-one else in that audience could see it. And then...

REVEREND SMALL: My God. She's dancing right off the stage.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) This was a new feature in the programme. She came dancing right up the centre aisle of the theatre. Everyone got to their feet. Flickering and dipping like a pale pink flame, she took no notice of us. She danced herself right out of the theatre.

REVEREND SMALL: Never seen anything like it.
THE DOCTOR: I knew it! They're taking control of her.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I left the Reverend Mr Small behind, and bundled my way through the perplexed crowd. I knew this wasn't planned as part of a show. Something was dreadfully wrong. The manager and the usherette stared in mute incomprehension as the star of their show pirouetted out of the building.
(Outside. Wind howling.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Outside, the wind clutched at us and ripped the breath from my lungs. It was pitch dark with freezing rain and lashing wind. I lost sight of the dancer at first, ploughing onwards towards the rattling boards.

THE DOCTOR: Miss Stott! Ernestina!

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) But my words were ripped away by the storm. And then I found her. As the crowd came surging at my back, eager to see what was happening, I caught a glimpse of Ernestina. It was as if she hadn't even noticed the inclement weather. She was in a trance, under somebody's spell. Her limbs were flickering, and she was spinning at the very end of the

pier. I knew I had only seconds to catch her. I tore after her, feet pounding on the boards.

REVEREND SMALL: Doctor! What are you doing?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She hovered at the very brink of disaster. Her face was tilted upwards and streaming with cold rain.

THE DOCTOR: Ernestina, you must resist them. They are commanding you to do this to yourself but you must come back to safety!

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She wouldn't listen to me. She was completely calm, as her own feet danced her right over the edge.

REVEREND SMALL: She's going to jump!

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) In an instant I knew what to do. I unwound my scarf and looped it into a huge multicoloured rope. It was soaked through and heavy, and took quite some effort to whip it around my head in all that terrible storm. At the very second that gravity took over, a look of awful panic came over Ernestina's face. She knew what danger she was in. She could see where the slippers had led her. She started to topple through the black turbid air into the sea, and I caught her right in the nick of time, lassoed her neatly with my trusty scarf, and hauled her back to safety.

REVEREND SMALL: Goodness me. I've never seen anything like it.
THE DOCTOR: It's all right. She's unconscious with shock but she's alive.
REVEREND SMALL: We have to get her back inside. She might have been killed. What was the matter with her?
THE DOCTOR: Possessed, Reverend Small.
REVEREND SMALL: Eh?
THE DOCTOR: By a malign will not her own.
REVEREND SMALL: What? What malign will?
THE DOCTOR: Something that wants its shoes back.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We dragged her back to her dressing-room. She was muttering incoherently.

ERNESTINA: I wanted to fly over the sea, that's all.
REVEREND SMALL: Here, my dear. A tot of brandy.
ERNESTINA: No I mustn't.
THE DOCTOR: Stand back everyone, give her room. She doesn't want the brandy!
ERNESTINA: I'm so confused. It was like I wasn't me. Someone was talking in my head. A rattling angry buzzing voice.
THE DOCTOR: Here. Let me help you with those shoes.
ERNESTINA: No. Leave them. They are mine. Mine, do you hear? You tried to take them from me before.
THE DOCTOR: Ernestina, everything that's happening to you is because of those shoes.
ERNESTINA: No!
THE DOCTOR: We must return them to the museum. To Mrs Wibbsey.
ERNESTINA: Her. It was her voice in my head. Mocking and jeering at me. Telling me to dance, dance, dance into the sea.
THE DOCTOR: Why? What for?
ERNESTINA: She wants me dead. That's what she said. She laughed and talked about dragging my water-logged corpse out of the sea. They want my corpse. My corpse. They want me dead for taking the shoes.
REVEREND SMALL: This is a bit rum. Who's this Mrs Wibbsey?
THE DOCTOR: She's a curatress of the museum - sinister, frosty woman. Who are they, Ernestina, mm? Tell me?
ERNESTINA: They are inside Mrs Wibbsey. Haven't you seen them? They are teeming and swarming inside her, looking out through her eyes. And they want to be inside us all, Doctor.
(THE DOCTOR sighs. Buzzing starts.)

THE DOCTOR: As I thought.
REVEREND SMALL: Funny business all round, this.
ERNESTINA: Can't you hear them, Reverend? Buzzing? I was stung again and again. I have felt their sting.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) It was the next morning that a recovered and chastened Miss Stott returned with me to the Palace of Curios. She was swaddled up in a great big coat and dark glasses. The shoes were in a hatbox she kept clutched in both arms.

MRS WIBBSEY: Well, this is a surprise. I had thought I would have to prosecute.
THE DOCTOR: Don't rub it in, just take the shoes. Ernestina is happy to give them back, aren't you, Ernestina?
ERNESTINA: I ... I ... You were inside my head.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Mrs Wibbsey made a moue of disgusted incomprehension. She treated Ernestina as if she was beneath her contempt. She opened the hatbox and fingered the shiny satin of the shoes, under layers of tissue paper, where the original mummified feet Ernestina had removed from the shoes, chilly cutlets of dead flesh, deformed by dancing and decades of drying out.

MRS WIBBSEY: These belonged to Francesca. She was an arialiste, a dancer on the high wire. She died over a hundred years ago.
THE DOCTOR: And how do you come to be in possession of her feet, or rather more to the point, how do these feet come to be in possession of you?
MRS WIBBSEY: Get out of here, both of you.
THE DOCTOR: Ah, but it's not the feet, is it. Nor the shoes, come to that. They are simply tools - tools for the will that speaks through you, the amplified will of a million tiny irate souls.

(Slight buzzing.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Mrs Wibbsey had turned feral on us, spitting and snarling as she clutched the hatbox.

ERNESTINA: That buzzing again. I heard it in my head last night.
THE DOCTOR: I've heard it before too.
MRS WIBBSEY: You would go and get yourself stung, stupid girl. Once an animal's been stung by a hornet, nothing is ever the same again.
(More buzzing.)
MRS WIBBSEY: But that was never part of the plan, nor was your stealing these shoes.
THE DOCTOR: She must have detected the hornet resonance inside them, eh Mrs Wibbsey, and was drawn towards them like a magnet.
MRS WIBBSEY: And sought to use them for her own trifling ends to help her dance. But my masters are not yours to command, girl. Their powers aren't to be used for your benefit. Your interference has disturbed Francesca's peaceful rest, and the powers that lay dormant within her fleshly remains, powers that I have guarded for all these years, are now awake. Within the hive tiny wings are flickering with new life. Can you feel the air tremble and vibrate? They are coming after you.
ERNESTINA: Doctor, I want to go.
MRS WIBBSEY: You are to be their new hostess, Ernestina. They knew at once. When you were stung on the beach the other day it was an accident, a fluke. But my masters knew at once that you were the perfect hostess for the hive mind in this era. Another dancer, just like Francesca. You see, the hornets have a sense of poetry.
THE DOCTOR: More doggerel, I'd say. But aren't *you* their hostess?
MRS WIBBSEY: Francesca has been their home for one hundred years. I am merely their guardian.
ERNESTINA: But how ... how did you know I'd been stung?
THE DOCTOR: Because her special relationship means she knows everything the insects are doing.
MRS WIBBSEY: I have their powers. I share their wonderful gifts. Like every curator of this museum for the past hundred years, we have known the sting of the sleeping hornets. We have tended the remains of Francesca, and kept the Queen of the hive safe.

ERNESTINA: Doctor, she's scaring me.
MRS WIBBSEY: You won't be allowed to leave this place. You will learn to serve the Queen and her hive. Your own ego and ambitions made you steal the shoes, made you want to dance and be applauded, but there is a higher cause, a greater honour.
THE DOCTOR: Going to keep us here, are you? If it's all the same to you, I've been round once, got my money's worth.
MRS WIBBSEY: You are at the mercy of my masters.
THE DOCTOR: Come on, Ernestina. When you've heard one rant you've heard them all.
MRS WIBBSEY: You'd never get out of here alive. The air is thick with them, swarming at the exits. Can't you hear them?
ERNESTINA: What are you going to do with us?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) But it was already happening. Mrs Wibbsey was concentrating her will, utilizing the powers that the hornets had bestowed upon her. Like them, she too could alter the size of living beings. The insects had used it to hide themselves away, unseen, in the dead bodies of creatures, in the corpse of a long-dead Francesca, for instance. Now Mrs Wibbsey's vocal chords were emitting a weird emulation of the hornets' buzz, and Ernestina and I were getting smaller than Alice In Wonderland.

(Noise indicating power used to miniaturise.)
ERNESTINA: Doctor!
THE DOCTOR: Hold my hand.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) It was a horrifying vertiginous sensation. The cold lino rushed up to meet us. The buzzing air scorched our lungs as we shrank.
(*This is where the radio broadcast ended part one and started part two.*)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) In a matter of seconds we were small enough to fit into our enemy's hands. She bent to pick us up cackling with glee as she did so. Her flesh this close smelled of mothballs, and stale peppermints. She almost squeezed the life out of us when she carried us through the air. I held onto Ernestina as she passed out in shock.

MRS WIBBSEY: My masters want a closer look at their prize.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I knew that we'd be done for if she put us among the insects now. We were so tiny. The venom from their stings would kill us in a flash. Indeed, their stings alone would be the end of us if they ran us through. But Mrs Wibbsey *didn't* put us straight among the insects. She set us down in a vast glass case containing an object I had studied briefly the day before - a Victorian doll's house, standing in immaculate model gardens, and populated by peg dolls.

MRS WIBBSEY: We'll keep you there for a while, keep you comfortable. What do you think? Do you like your new home?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I lay still beside the unconscious Ernestina, and determined not to move, or do anything entertaining until, like an enormous old cat, Mrs Wibbsey got bored and moved away, taking the hatbox of slippers and mouldy feet with her. She was humming The Nutcracker under her breath, chiming with the distant susurration of her insect masters.

THE DOCTOR: Ernestina, are you awake?
ERNESTINA: Where are we?
THE DOCTOR: In a garden. I think we're safe for now.
ERNESTINA: We're outside? Did we get away from that dreadful woman?
THE DOCTOR: In a manner of speaking, yes.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Ernestina looked up at the house before us. Four storeys rose grandly beneath a confusing sky.

ERNESTINA: Where is this place?
THE DOCTOR: We're still in the museum. We've been miniaturised.
ERNESTINA: This is a nightmare. When will it stop?

THE DOCTOR: We're being played with, but we must take cover. We are very vulnerable at this size.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We stepped cautiously along the fake gravel of the path, and gingerly I touched the glossy black door of the house. It creaked open, revealing a dark hallway beyond. I squinted, and saw that the whole place was kitted out with rugs and pictures, and the stuffed heads of mice.

ERNESTINA: Oh Doctor, I'm sorry, this is all my fault.
THE DOCTOR: Don't blame yourself. When they stung you, the venom in the hornet's sting must have attuned you into the presence of the slippers. You couldn't help stealing them. How frustrating that must have been for our enemies. You came dancing in and almost scuppered their plans.
ERNESTINA: Wearing them, I felt wonderful. I'd never danced like that before. It was like flying. I was good, wasn't I? I was better than I'd ever been before.
THE DOCTOR: I'm afraid it wasn't really dancing. It was possession. Inadvertent possession.
ERNESTINA: I don't like it in here. Everything's wrong somehow. Skewed.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) It was a madhouse to scale. The portraits on the walls had blank faces, and so did the peg dolls, wearing a rough approximation of Victorian dress.

ERNESTINA: I know they're harmless, but even so they make me shiver.
THE DOCTOR: We just have to sit it out until Mrs Wibbsey or her masters decide they are bored with their game, and return us to our proper size.
ERNESTINA: What if they starve us in here?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) That was a very real problem, I realised. I could survive longer than the girl with no food and water, but if they left us for days on end in the half dark, then we were both done for. For one mad fleeting moment, I imagined us trying to capture a bluebottle and barbecuing its rancid flesh on the papery lawn.

ERNESTINA: (Gasp.) That one moved.
THE DOCTOR: What?
ERNESTINA: That doll. The father, at the head of the dining table. Look.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She was right. We were looking at a silent tableau of the family at dinner. Twelve of them sat at their appointed places before a simulacrum of a feast. As we had stood talking in the doorway, the blank face of the father doll turned to look at us. In spite of his lack of features, he somehow still managed to look piqued at our interruption.

ERNESTINA: They're alive!
THE DOCTOR: They can't be.
ERNESTINA: You said the shoes were alive, possessed. These creatures have powers we don't even know about.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) And we watched in horror as the patriarch at the head of the Victorian table set down his carving-knife and fork. He turned away from the family, and came marching stiffly towards us.

ERNESTINA: Move, Doctor!

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) So we ran, back into the imposing hallway, under the stairs, to the servants' hall downstairs, where the maids and butler turned to glare at us.

ERNESTINA: They're all the same!

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) With clumsy, jerky movements, they set off across the tiled floor. The diminutive cook raised a long silver knife with which she had been filleting a wooden fish. It glittered in the murky air. Again we ran, back upstairs, where the family were waiting for us with those hideous empty faces. I led Ernestina up to the first landing, the staircase creaking

under our feet.

ERNESTINA: Where are we going? We can't run away from them forever.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I had a horrible suspicion they would never tire, and would continue to chase us around this nightmare house until we flagged and collapsed.

ERNESTINA: Doctor!
THE DOCTOR: I'll think of something. Just give me time.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) And so we ran through room after opulent room, under crystal chandeliers and through tapestried sitting-rooms. We paused for breath, barricading ourselves in a bedroom on the third floor.

ERNESTINA: We're backing ourselves into a corner. Can't you see? They're playing with us, driving us further and further into the
THE DOCTOR: You must calm down. If you become hysterical, then it's hopeless.
ERNESTINA: You've seen nothing yet.
THE DOCTOR: Listen.
(Steady thumps.)
ERNESTINA: Are they, are they getting closer?
THE DOCTOR: It's hard to tell. This house rattles and creaks.
ERNESTINA: Fire. They're made out of wood. What if we were to set them on fire?
THE DOCTOR: Ernestina, think. We're as vulnerable to the flames as they are. If this house goes up in flames
ERNESTINA: Well, you think of something. It's all down to you, this. If you hadn't made me return the slippers to the museum we wouldn't have been at the mercy of that terrible woman.
THE DOCTOR: Sometimes, that's the only way to learn what's really going on.
ERNESTINA: I don't care what's going on. I just want to get out to this place.
THE DOCTOR: It's too late now. We have to see it through.
ERNESTINA: Damn you, Doctor, for bringing me into this. I wish you'd just let me dance myself into the sea.
THE DOCTOR: Oh! You don't mean that.
ERNESTINA: Don't you tell me what I do and don't mean.
THE DOCTOR: Oh ... Ernestina ...
(Buzzing which has been faint in this scene now more audible.)
THE DOCTOR: Turn round very slowly, and don't scream.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) As she had paced up and down the dusty bedroom shouting the odds and railing against me, Ernestina had been quite unaware of the third body in the room. I'd only just noticed it myself. Now she turned very slowly, biting her lip so that she wouldn't scream.

ERNESTINA: What ... what is it?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) It was another doll, sitting on the rocking-chair at the other side of the four-poster bed. A china doll this time, with a benign mindless grin, and black vacant eyes. At the sight of it, Ernestina gasped in shock.

ERNESTINA: Is it ... alive like the others?
THE DOCTOR: I don't know. It's been quite still the whole time we've been in here.
ERNESTINA: There's no escape, is there? I'm going to die. Die in a doll's house.
THE DOCTOR: Pull yourself together, girl.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I was fascinated by the doll, staring blandly ahead of itself. Its eyes were bulging pools of darkness, glassy and empty. I found myself staring into their fisheye lenses.

ERNESTINA: Don't get too close. If it lashes out with those big china hands...

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) But I was still drawn to the gigantic baby. As I stood right before it, I could see at last what lay beyond those dark eyes, deep inside the head. I could see the multifaceted insect eyes of my enemies staring back at me. I could see their antennae twitch, and their legs flexing and grabbing against the slippery glass. The baby doll was teeming with insects. Their wings whirred and beat with excitement as they saw me within their grasp, staring back at them.

ERNESTINA: What is it? What have you seen?
THE DOCTOR: Our foes are in there, Ernestina, watching our every move.
(Multiple voices of The Swarm using the voice of MRS WIBBSEY.)
MRS WIBBSEY: We know you, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: And I know *you* .
MRS WIBBSEY: You are a very long-lived creature on this world, are you not? It is decades since we last saw you. Almost a century of hiding ourselves away, making fleeting forays into the world, but mostly hiding away in the body of our hostess, and now we find you still alive. How strange.
THE DOCTOR: Yes, isn't it? I can be a very perplexing fellow, I'm told, though I don't see it myself.
ERNESTINA: Doctor, come away.
MRS WIBBSEY: We can't probe your mind.
THE DOCTOR: I'm afraid not - off limits. Why not let me ask the questions, hmm? Tell me, how do you remember an encounter with me that hasn't even happened yet?
MRS WIBBSEY: But of course it's happened. Eighteen Thirty-Two, over a hundred years ago.
THE DOCTOR: Oh. How very interesting. Eighteen Thirty-Two, you say. And where was that, hmm?
MRS WIBBSEY: You are trying to trick us.
THE DOCTOR: I think I see what's going on here. It's quite fascinating. We've met before, but for me it hasn't happened yet. I'm moving backwards, relative to you. What a wonderful dance, wouldn't you agree, Ernestina?
ERNESTINA: I ... I don't understand any of it.
THE DOCTOR: I think I'm beginning to. To put it in your terms, the hornets and I are performing a fox-trot through Time with each other. A temporal tango. I'm waltzing with the Swarm.
MRS WIBBSEY: Beware, Doctor, we could destroy you in an instant.
THE DOCTOR: Hah! I'd like to see you try. You wouldn't have our next encounter to look forward to then.
MRS WIBBSEY: You are truly from a later period? You have seen our future?
THE DOCTOR: Ah! Now, I never said that, did I?
MRS WIBBSEY: But you must tell us everything you know. Tell us.
THE DOCTOR: You obviously have incredible powers. You can do all these awful amazing things. But you cannot make me tell you anything. You cannot control my mind.
MRS WIBBSEY: You think not?

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She laughed and jeered at me.

(The possessed MRS WIBBSEY laughs.)

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) The whole swarm laughed at me. They agitated their tiny bristling bodies inside the doll's hollow head, the buzzing reached a fever pitch.

ERNESTINA: It's ... it's filling my head. I can't hear myself think.
THE DOCTOR: They want to block out our thoughts, subsume them with their own hive mind.
ERNESTINA: I can feel their greed, their anger. They won't stop, will they, till the whole of the human race is enslaved to their will.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We tried to back away, to break the link with the powerful minds inhabiting the china doll. As we strove to free ourselves, those twin black pools of darkness loomed seemingly larger and larger, the limbs and wings within thrashed against the glass, the jewel-like eyes of the hornets flashed with hatred.

MRS WIBBSEY: Your mind is delicious, Doctor. We will have it eventually. One day we will nest there in the heart of all your knowledge. You have that to look forward to.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) With one last Herculean effort, I took hold of Ernestina, and wrenched both of us physically away from the monstrous doll and the wicked swarm within, and at that very second, the glass eyes smashed into a thousand shards, the doll's eyes shattered into black smithereens. The pieces flew far and wide across the bedroom as we backed away. The Swarm came leaking out like a noisy black smoke, pouring out of the baby's dead eyes. They too had adjusted their size to suit the environment.

THE DOCTOR: Don't look back, Ernestina. Run.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Out on the landing we paused for the merest second, deciding whether to go up or down stairs. Our decision was made for us. Coming up the stairs was the peg doll family, alerted by our hullabaloo. Stiffly they marched in a deadly formal phalanx, their wooden arms swishing on the air like cudgels.

ERNESTINA: We can't keep running.
THE DOCTOR: We have to. Up, into the attic.
ERNESTINA: But we'll be cornered up there.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We raced up the last flight of stairs, flinging whatever came to hand after our pursuers. Of course, nothing could deter the swarm of insects, which came after us in gaseous form, almost leisurely in its movements. The hornets were taking their time with us, confident that we had no escape route. We attacked the wooden family of dolls as if they were skittles. Between us, we hefted up a metal plant pot containing a fake aspidistra, and sent it rolling heavily down the stairs.

THE DOCTOR: That'll scuttle 'em.
ERNESTINA: You sound as if you're enjoying yourself.
THE DOCTOR: What? In such danger? How could I possibly?
ERNESTINA: But you are! You're loving every moment.
THE DOCTOR: Don't be foolish, girl. Now, quickly - up the attic ladder. We can seal the hatchway for a while and keep them at bay.
ERNESTINA: But ... what do we do then? We'll be trapped up in the attic.
THE DOCTOR: I think I have a plan.
ERNESTINA: Very well, Doctor. What choice have I got?
THE DOCTOR: Quickly.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We scampered up the wooden ladder, and found ourselves in a large cluttered attic.

(Trapdoor closed.)
ERNESTINA: Thank God. That's quietened them down. That awful drone.
THE DOCTOR: Yes. That noise has been playing on my nerves these past few days.
ERNESTINA: So what do we do up here?
THE DOCTOR: Shh. I'm thinking.
(Tapping on wood.)
ERNESTINA: Can you think a bit more quickly? Those ghastly effigies are thumping on the floor.
THE DOCTOR: They'll break in eventually, and the hornets will leak through as well.
ERNESTINA: There you go again. You dreadful man! You're taking a positive relish in our plight, aren't you?
THE DOCTOR: Well ... yes. You don't think this is the *worst* danger I've ever been in, do you? Oh no. I've been in some horrible almighty scrapes in my time. Admittedly, as far as monstrous doll's houses go, I've been a little out of the loop, but...
ERNESTINA: Enough, Doctor. Kindly apply your magnificent brain to getting us out of here.
THE DOCTOR: I've got it!
ERNESTINA: What?
THE DOCTOR: Of course! I'm brilliant.

ERNESTINA: Tell me, what?
THE DOCTOR: Here, come here. That gable window.
ERNESTINA: Look how high up we are. What are you going to do?
THE DOCTOR: You obviously weren't listening when I said I'd been out of the loop. I suppose you think I wear this scarf as a Raffish fashion statement, cutting a dash through Time and Space - well, think on, Ernestina. This piece of couture is about to come to your rescue for a second time.
ERNESTINA: What on earth are you going to do with it?
THE DOCTOR: Looping it around a chimney pot. Now, we tie it as tight as can be and then fling it across the top of the display cabinet to snag itself upon that gigantic screw, there.
ERNESTINA: Where did you learn to do that?
THE DOCTOR: The Wild West, of course. Now, if you'll oblige us, (coughs) your stockings. We're going to fly through the air with the greatest of ease, straight out of the glass cabinet and back into the museum.
ERNESTINA: But that's...
THE DOCTOR: Brilliant? Audacious?
ERNESTINA: We'll break our necks.
THE DOCTOR: Would you rather wait here for those hornets to break in? Now, please. Your stockings.
ERNESTINA: They're breaking through the hatch.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) The dolls came smashing their way murderously into the darkened attic. Suddenly, we were on our way, clutching a tight hold on her stockings and sliding swiftly down the tautened length of my scarf. Quite exhilarating, really. I had flung the scarf's furthest end to catch on the screw protruding from the edge of the glass cabinet. And so, clambering over without slicing ourselves in half was our next tricky feat. We levered ourselves over the sharp lip of the glass wall, and dangled down the other side.

ERNESTINA: This ludicrous neckwear of yours isn't going to hold.
THE DOCTOR: It won't let me down. It's gone to enormous lengths in the past in order to save my neck.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) The wool stretched, and I could feel its very fibres strain, and almost begin to unravel, as clutching each other, Ernestina and I slid slowly down the side of the glass cabinet - luckily, on the outside, rather than in. We were free. Ernestina even permitted herself a small whoop of joy and relief as we reached the parquet floor.

ERNESTINA: We made it.
THE DOCTOR: Didn't I tell you we would? Didn't I promise? Now, my only problem is, how do I get my scarf back? I don't want to go leaving it.
ERNESTINA: Isn't our biggest problem our size? We're still about two inches tall.
THE DOCTOR: Ah yes. (Cough.) Well, I'm sure that's fixable.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We stared around at the great dusty canyons of the Museum of Curios. Earlier, it had seemed rather a confined, poky kind of place. Now, it was colossal. We could lose ourselves forever among its exhibits. We wandered hopelessly for a bit in those silent halls. The beeswax polish on the wooden floors was sticky and slippery under our tiny feet.

ERNESTINA: I don't even understand how Mrs Wibbsey could shrink us like this. What is it? Magic?
THE DOCTOR: Hardly. She was using the powers that the hornets have lent her.
ERNESTINA: Well, it seems very much like magic to my simplistic mind.
THE DOCTOR: That's because you don't understand it. You can't see what's really going on.
ERNESTINA: Tell me, then. Explain it.
THE DOCTOR: All right, briefly. Everything in the Universe dances, Ernestina. Not just rather spoiled young women jumping about in the limelight.
ERNESTINA: I resent that.
THE DOCTOR: Everything! Every mote of dust, every mountain, everything is made of dancing atoms, vibrating madly to frequencies and tunes we can't even hear.

ERNESTINA: I see.
THE DOCTOR: Good. Well, these insects somehow have learned to manipulate matter itself with their own songs, their own unique powerful harmonies. As they buzz and hum, they can dance the molecules' binding matter further apart or bring them closer to. They have sung their song, and our very bodies have changed form at their command.
ERNESTINA: How can you defeat an enemy that can control matter like that?
THE DOCTOR: I don't know yet.
ERNESTINA: They can possess people's minds, take over living flesh or dead matter, and fill it with their own intentions.
THE DOCTOR: All in all, we're lucky to have slipped out from under their proboscises.
ERNESTINA: We should find Mrs Wibbsey. She'll be in her office, won't she? We should try and appeal to her as a ... a fellow human being. She must see that these things are doing wrong. Surely she can't want insects taking over everything?
THE DOCTOR: Of course! Oh! I've got it.
ERNESTINA: What on Earth? You gave me quite a turn, shouting like that.
THE DOCTOR: I'm sorry. It's just that I've had an idea. Vibrations. Sonic vibrations. I can do it. I can get us back to normal.
ERNESTINA: Relatively normal will do.
THE DOCTOR: Where's her office? The Wibbsey woman. Which direction from here? We need to find her at once.
ERNESTINA: What are you going to do? Remonstrate with her?
THE DOCTOR: She took the hatbox with your feet in it, didn't she? She took it to her office.
ERNESTINA: Well, not *my* feet, Doctor. She said they belonged to a tightrope walker, Francesca, a hundred years ago.
THE DOCTOR: Those feet and the slippers. That's what we need to get to.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) And so we struggled to get back our bearings, and skidded and slid our way over the polished floor towards Mrs Wibbsey's den. We paused in the doorway, drawing back in case the vast dragon of a curatress saw us there, peeping round at her. She was on the telephone. Her voice was huge as it echoed about us.

MRS WIBBSEY: (echoing) No, I'm afraid I don't know where he is. I'm sorry I can't be of more help, Reverend. He left here quite some time ago, I really can't assist you. Good day.
(Bell of telephone receiver being put down.)
THE DOCTOR: It sounds like we're being worried about. People are noticing our absence.
ERNESTINA: I've got a matinee this afternoon. I've got to get back to normal. People have paid good money to see me.
THE DOCTOR: If you're only a couple of inches tall they'll want some change.
ERNESTINA: Look. On her desk. The hatbox.
THE DOCTOR: She's keeping them right under her nose. Tricky.
(Sonic screwdriver whirr.)
ERNESTINA: What on earth's that?
THE DOCTOR: Mm? Sonic screwdriver. If I can just find the exact frequency those ballet shoes are tuned into...
ERNESTINA: I think I must still be asleep.
THE DOCTOR: Shh, let me concentrate. If I can do this remotely, we won't need to scramble all the way up there.
(Sonic screwdriver whirr.)
THE DOCTOR: Now then. These slippers have been used to manifest the will of the hornets. Even after all these years, they are trembling with the power of the insects still. I can tap into that energy and hopefully, the sonic screwdriver can effect a little matter manipulation of its own.
ERNESTINA: Will it return us to life-sized?
THE DOCTOR: It's more effective than a bottle labelled "Drink me."
(Sonic screwdriver whirr. Noise of miniaturisation being reversed. MRS WIBBSEY cries out.)
MRS WIBBSEY: No! It's not possible!
THE DOCTOR: Oh, I don't know, all things are possible with a keen wit and...
MRS WIBBSEY: Get away from me! Keep back!
ERNESTINA: She's a coward with nothing to back her up.
THE DOCTOR: Be careful, Ernestina. I think she's got rather a lot to back her up. That whole

insect race.
MRS WIBBSEY: They won't let you go. It's not as easy as that.
THE DOCTOR: You'd know, wouldn't you?
MRS WIBBSEY: I have no choice, no volition. I have no will.
THE DOCTOR: You can resist them. We all have willpower. We don't have to be very strong physically or very tough, but we all have personality, we can all stick up for ourselves.
MRS WIBBSEY: You don't understand, Doctor. You don't really know anything about them yet. They are so, so powerful, and when they've been inside your mind, tiptoeing through your every thought, knowing everything about you and what you've been, they have complete control of you.
THE DOCTOR: Are you saying that you can never escape them? That having once been possessed by them, you are always susceptible?
MRS WIBBSEY: Their attention ebbs and flows, but I know they are always close by.
ERNESTINA: Doctor, she sounds almost normal.
THE DOCTOR: That's because the hornets are concentrating elsewhere, probably furious at our escape. Ah! My scarf. I must fetch it back.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I hurried back to the glass cabinet where the doll's house sat quite innocuously. I unpicked the loops and knots in my scarf, and with just a blast of residual energy from the sonic screwdriver, that beloved garment of mine returned gradually to the size that Madame Nostradamus, the dear old thing, had intended for me. All the while I could hear the irate buzzing of the minuscule hornets. They knew that Ernestina and I were free. They were apoplectic at having us slip from under their insecty noses.

(Insect buzzing in background.)
THE DOCTOR: Don't you try to follow us, will you, eh? Can't you see, it's hopeless. You're all very good at taking over dead objects with your hive mind, hah! Oh, you can march dolls around or make stuffed creatures gallop about. You can even dance old shoes to their death, but you'll never conquer *living* flesh. You'll never conquer the spirit, human or otherwise.
(The Swarm using again the voice of MRS WIBBSEY.)
MRS WIBBSEY: Is that a fact, Doctor?
THE DOCTOR: Oh! Mrs Wibbsey, sneaking up on me like that. Oh dear. Your voice has gone creepy again. They've subsumed you once more, haven't they?
MRS WIBBSEY: Look to your friend, Doctor, the dancing girl.
THE DOCTOR: Ernestina!
ERNESTINA: Doctor, I don't know why I did it. She made me. I ... Help me!

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Ernestina came out of the cubbyhole office on tiptoes.
(Noise of The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy in the background.)
THE DOCTOR: (narrating) She staggered across the shining floor on tiny, delicate steps. She was wearing the deadly slippers with the ribbons flailing about her feet.

THE DOCTOR: Ernestina! Take them off. Destroy them at once - they can control you!
ERNESTINA: They're in my mind, Doctor. I can feel the scratching of their legs inside my mind.
THE DOCTOR: It's an illusion. They aren't really inside you. They are projecting their thoughts. Can't you feel the air swarming with their evil vibrations?
ERNESTINA: I'm dancing. I have a matinee.
THE DOCTOR: Ernestina, stop.
MRS WIBBSEY: You must go, child. Your public awaits you.
(The possessed MRS WIBBSEY laughs.)

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I watched in appalled horror as my new young friend was forced to dance against her will towards the main exit. She wept and contorted her face with abject fear. Her legs were steadfast, though, flashing out like dainty pistons as she neared the door. (Mrs Wibbsey's evil laugh again.) Then she was out of the door, and I was forced to follow, racking my brains as how to help her.

THE DOCTOR: The hornets are toying with us. They're proving they can control us, but you must resist them, Ernestina. They will hurt you if you don't resist them.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Mrs Wibbsey came along behind us and we made a rather macabre parade down the main promenade. Holiday-makers strolling by stared in amusement at the helpless ballerina as she dipped and swooped her way to the pier.

THE DOCTOR: Ernestina!
(MRS WIBBSEY normal voice again.)
MRS WIBBSEY: It ... it's hopeless, Doctor. My control over my own mind is returning. That means the hornets must be bringing all their powers to bear on that poor girl.
(Seagulls sounds in the background.)
MRS WIBBSEY: She is doomed, Doctor. She's being colonised. She will become their new hive.
THE DOCTOR: No! I won't have it!
ERNESTINA: Doctor, help me!

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We were met by the Reverend Small, who came out of one of the tearooms looking flushed and anxious, and still holding a cup of tea on its saucer.

REVEREND SMALL: Has the girl gone mad?
THE DOCTOR: She's being driven insane by the insects, Reverend.
REVEREND SMALL: Goodness! Oh - there've been a lot about this season, I suppose.
THE DOCTOR: Stop gabbling, man. Help me with her. She's possessed.
REVEREND SMALL: Possessed? Demons, you mean?
THE DOCTOR: If you like. If that helps you understand.
REVEREND SMALL: There's no need to patronise anyone, old chap.
MRS WIBBSEY: They are not from this world, but they've been here almost a thousand years.
THE DOCTOR: A thousand?
MRS WIBBSEY: Waiting, waiting for the right moment. And they know you, Doctor. They recognise you as the same man, the same delicious mind they have encountered again and again.
THE DOCTOR: There's no time for this now.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) Though really, I was desperate to hear more of this strange tale. But I was forced, as ever, to leap into action and dash across the road to the pier. The crowds were drawing back, amused and enthralled as Ernestina danced along the boards.

ERNESTINA: Please, Doctor, stop them.
THE DOCTOR: You must resist them yourself. You must stop dancing.
ERNESTINA: I have never danced like this before. I don't even have to think about it. My body moves without conscious thought.
THE DOCTOR: It's marvellous, but it isn't right. It isn't you. They're using you. You are just the same as one of those wooden dolls.
ERNESTINA: No. It *is* me. This is how I've always dreamed of being able to dance.
THE DOCTOR: But you'll tire. They'll drive you to the very edge. They'll make you dance until your feet are bloody stumps, just because they can.
ERNESTINA: I can't stop.
REVEREND SMALL: Oh my goodness, that poor girl. She's just a blur.
THE DOCTOR: Stand back, all of you.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) For the third time that day, my scarf came in handy. I tossed one end of it to the Reverend Small, and between us we made a kind of tripwire across the pier.

REVEREND SMALL: What do you hope to do?
THE DOCTOR: Everyone, stand back. This isn't a free performance.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) We pulled the scarf tight as Ernestina danced and pirouetted dangerously close to the edge. Then we snagged her delectable feet, and tangled her up in yards of multicoloured wool. She fell.

THE DOCTOR: Quick, Reverend, get those shoes off her feet at once.
REVEREND SMALL: This is a strange affair.

THE DOCTOR: Just do as I say. I don't care how strange it is, we need to get these things off her feet.
ERNESTINA: Oh. That's it. Thank you. You've done it.
REVEREND SMALL: They ... they're still dancing, even with no-one wearing them.

THE DOCTOR: (narrating) I snatched at the ghastly things, one eluding my grasp for a few moments. The other I stuffed into my coat pocket where I could feel it still jigging and dancing and thrumming with hateful energy.

THE DOCTOR: Ernestina, are you all right?
ERNESTINA: I'm ... I'm fine, Doctor. Have ... have the hornets gone?
THE DOCTOR: Let's ask Mrs Wibbsey. She knows more about this than any of us.
MRS WIBBSEY: They have receded, but they could take control of me again at any minute.
THE DOCTOR: There's only one thing for it.
REVEREND SMALL: I don't understand any of this.
THE DOCTOR: You don't have to, Reverend Small. Try to forget what has happened here today. It'll only give you a headache thinking about it. Where's that other ballet slipper gone? Ah! Here it is. Eurgh! Nasty thing. Come on. We need to collect up the detritus of this little escapade. I think I'd better take that doll's house away myself. Ernestina, come along and help me. Reverend Small, you can come and help me carry some things aboard my ship.
ERNESTINA: I still don't feel at all right.
THE DOCTOR: That will wear off, I hope.
REVEREND SMALL: Ship? You're a seafaring man, Doctor?
THE DOCTOR: No. As for you, Mrs Wibbsey, you're going on a journey. How would you feel about taking up a new situation?

MIKE YATES: So that's how you came by your housekeeper.
THE DOCTOR: Indeed, Mike. I have to hypnotise her every now and then to subdue the insect will that can still creep into her consciousness every few days. It seemed safer all round if I brought her here into her future and my cottage.
MIKE YATES: You're keeping her here like Mr Noggins' stuffed animals.
THE DOCTOR: Yes, just like anything else that's susceptible to the hornets' influence. I've been bringing them all inside the force-shield for safe keeping, then I've been trying to work out what to do about this business.
MIKE YATES: That was quite a tale, Doctor.
THE DOCTOR: Well, it's up there with the strangest, you'll agree.
MIKE YATES: Actually, in a way I'm relieved.
THE DOCTOR: How so?
MIKE YATES: It's somehow reassuring that you're still out there having these adventures of yours.
THE DOCTOR: I haven't been growing geraniums since last we met, Mike.
MIKE YATES: I used to think the escapades I was involved in were some kind of purgatory you were intent on inflicting on the Brigadier.
THE DOCTOR: I'll have to take you in the TARDIS one of these days, then you'll soon see. I get up to this kind of thing all the time.
MIKE YATES: No, thank you. Poor Jo Grant was never the same. And some of the things Miss Smith told me.
THE DOCTOR: Now don't go raking up the past, Mike. The time lines are tangled enough, remember?
MIKE YATES: Quite. Speaking of which, er, Mrs Wibbsey claimed you'd met these hornet chaps before, but in the past, in what was it? Eighteen Thirty Two? And you had no recollection?
THE DOCTOR: Yes. We were moving in opposite directions relative to each other, do you see? So both sides in our great struggle had different memories of each other. Mine were from the future, Earth relative, and theirs were from the past, and so my duty, as I saw it, was not only to stow things safely away here in Nest Cottage, but also to pursue my insect foes into history.
MIKE YATES: I think I'm starting to see. So, are you saying that you went on another jaunt in that old death trap of yours after these noxious beasties?
THE DOCTOR: Exactly!

MIKE YATES: And does that mean you have another tale to spin for me?
THE DOCTOR: It isn't light yet. Can you hear them upstairs, clattering and banging about in the house?
MIKE YATES: Is Mrs Wibbsey all right up there?
THE DOCTOR: Tough as old boots. Now then, you may have noticed this is a wine cellar as well as a make-shift lab.
MIKE YATES: I don't drink these days, Doctor. Like to keep a clear head.
THE DOCTOR: Oh, I see. In that case, more tea, gunpowder green, hmm?
MIKE YATES: That ballet slipper I found - it was Ernestina's?
THE DOCTOR: Can you feel it trembling in your fingers? Still powerful.
MIKE YATES: But what *did* you find? Where did you go? And where did the trail lead you next?
THE DOCTOR: Ah, well. It's the dark before the dawn, Mike. My stories are getting darker too, I'm afraid.
MIKE YATES: Why am I not surprised.
THE DOCTOR: Leaving Mrs Wibbsey here acting as my housekeeper some seventy years after her own time ... oh, she was most impressed by all the mod cons. I gave the ballet slippers to the TARDIS to consider. The old girl is like a bloodhound when she gets a scent. Me too. I'm very persistent when my dander's up.
MIKE YATES: So? Where *did* you go next?
THE DOCTOR: First the tea, and when it's ready, I'll tell you about Eighteen Thirty-Two, and The Circus Of Doom.

(Tom Baker's closing Doctor Who theme, composed by Ron Grainer.)

ANNOUNCER: (Tom Baker) Hornets' Nest - The Dead Shoes, by Paul Magrs, starred Tom Baker and Richard Franklin. Mrs Wibbsey was played by Susan Jameson, Ernestina was Claire Corbett, and Reverend Small was Christian Rodska. The Script Editor was Michael Stevens. It was Produced and Directed by Kate Thomas, and is published by BBC Audio Books.

Transcribed by David Tait